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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5218
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 1921
RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 0488
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 0271
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0103
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//J9// PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM J5 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM J4 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 001274

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EAID, PINR, AMGT, MX, CU, XL, XK, JM
SUBJECT: USAID SITUATION REPORT 1 HURRICANE DEAN

REF: KINGSTON 1272

SUMMARY

1. As of August 20, the USAID assessment team reports that Hurricane Dean has destroyed the sugarcane crop in Saint Catherine Parish and resulted in pockets of damage throughout the island. Initial assessments indicate that Clarendon, Saint Thomas, and Saint Catherine parishes have sustained significant damage. In response, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has provided USD 100,000 through USAID/Jamaica to support the Government of Jamaica's (GOJ) Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to procure and distribute emergency relief supplies, as well as to support damage assessments to affected areas. Currently, comprehensive estimates of damage from Hurricane Dean are unavailable. End Summary.

Damage Assessments

2. On August 20, USAID staff assessed the impact of Hurricane Dean in a flyover mission to the eastern and western ends of the island, as well as by road in caravans with Embassy personnel. The aerial assessments conducted on August 20, included ODPEM and GOJ authorities, but all locations were not able to be visited and disaster specialists were only able to spend a few minutes on the ground in each location.

3. The team on the aerial assessment to the eastern

region of the island reported that pockets of damage were apparent in Shooter Hill area and Bull Bay. In Saint Catherine Parish, the sugarcane crop has been seriously damaged by the strong winds. In addition, the water pipeline near Port Royal Road was washed out, and the Yallahs River bridge is down. However, weather conditions prevented the team from traveling to all locations.

¶4. The team that traveled to the western region estimated that Hurricane Dean demolished approximately 80 percent of buildings in Old Harbor fishing village in Saint Catherine Parish and 75 percent in Portland Cottage in Clarendon Parish. Old Harbor and Portland Cottage do not have water or electricity. In addition, an estimated 60 percent of the roads to Clarendon are blocked. Rocky Point also sustained damage, but no specifics are available.

¶5. The team traveling overland reported that the roads from Kingston to Kingston Airport were clear except for the road that leads directly to the airport. USAID staff spoke with police and laborers working to unblock the road who reported that it was unclear if it would take one or two days to reopen the road. Clearing of the airport road is crucial to facilitating the delivery of relief supplies, including those being prepared for airlift by USAID. However, as of 1300 hours local time the airport road was passable using a four-wheel drive vehicle, according to the team.

ODPEM Reports

KINGSTON 00001274 002 OF 002

¶6. The morning of August 20, ODPEM reported that 5,146 people are in 231 shelters islandwide. ODPEM reported damage to water supply systems. The GOJ Ministry of Health continues to monitor the situation in all parishes. Hospitals are open, but are only accepting emergency cases. Some hospitals are reportedly damaged.

USAID Response

¶7. On August 20, USAID/OFDA provided USD 100,000 through USAID/Jamaica for ODPEM and NGOs to purchase emergency relief supplies and support relief assessments to affected areas. The USAID assessment team on the ground in Kingston continues to assess damage, coordinate relief activities with other donors and partners, and analyze information on the impact of Hurricane Dean.

¶8. At 1700 hours local time on August 20, the USAID team plans to attend a donor and UN coordination meeting and expects to receive more comprehensive assessment information. The USAID assessment team will continue to conduct assessments in the coming days in order to identify priority relief activities and worst affected areas on the island.

JOHNSON